

We Claim:

1. A method of broadcasting of a program containing a plurality of versions from a broadcaster to viewers comprising:

broadcasting information from said broadcaster to said viewers indicating that said plurality of versions of said program are available to said viewers;

said broadcaster receiving requests from at least one of said viewers for at least one version of said plurality of versions of said program;

said broadcaster making a decision to broadcast said one version of said plurality of versions of said program based upon said requests; and

said broadcaster broadcasting said one version of said plurality of versions of said program to said one of said viewers.

10 2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

said viewer transmitting to said broadcaster a request for said at least one version of said plurality of versions of said program.

5 3. A method of broadcasting of a program containing a plurality of versions from a broadcaster to viewers comprising:

broadcasting information from said broadcaster to said viewers indicating that said plurality of versions of said program are available to said viewers;

said broadcaster receiving requests from a plurality of said viewers for at least two versions of said plurality of versions of said program;

said broadcaster making a decision to broadcast said two versions of said plurality of versions of said program based upon said requests; and

said broadcaster broadcasting said two versions of said plurality of versions of said program to said viewers.

10 4. The method of claim 3 further comprising:

said viewer receiving a broadcast comprising said at least two versions of said program;

selecting one version from said at least two versions of said plurality of  
5 versions of said program using viewer preference information; and  
displaying said one version.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein said viewer preference information is stored in a receiving unit.

6. The method of claim 4 wherein said step of selecting said one version further comprises:

obtaining content information contained in a blanking interval of said program.

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7. The method of claim 4 wherein said step of selecting said one version further comprises:

obtaining content information contained in a packet of digital information comprising said program.

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8. A method of broadcasting a first program containing multiple versions and a second program containing multiple versions comprising:

determining the time and duration when multiple versions occur for said first program and for said second program;

determining a first maximum number of channels utilized by said first program when said multiple versions occur;

determining a second maximum number of channels utilized by said second program when said multiple versions occur; and

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determining a start time for each program such that when said first program employs said first maximum number of channels does not coincide with when said second program employs said second maximum number of channels.

9. A method of broadcasting a first program containing multiple versions and a second program containing multiple versions comprising:

determining the time and duration when multiple versions occur for said first program and for said second program;

5 determining the maximum number of versions available at one time for said first program and an occurrence of said maximum number of versions for said first program;

determining the maximum number of versions available at one time for said second program and an occurrence of said maximum number of versions for said second program;

10 determining a start time for each program such that said occurrence of said maximum number of versions for said first program does not coincide with said occurrence of said maximum number of versions for said second program.

10. A method of broadcasting a first program containing multiple versions and a second program containing multiple versions comprising:

determining the time and duration when multiple versions occur for said first program and for said second program;

5 determining a first maximum number of channels utilized by said first program when said multiple versions occur;

determining a second maximum number of channels utilized by said second program when said multiple versions occur; and

10 inserting an advertisement in the broadcast stream associated with said first program such that when said first program employs said first maximum number of channels does not coincide with when said second program employs said second maximum number of channels.

11. A method of presenting advertising in conjunction with the broadcast of a program comprising a plurality of versions, the method comprising:

5 broadcasting said plurality of versions of said program wherein said broadcast includes content information for each version of said plurality of versions of said program;

determining a first characteristic of a first version of said plurality of versions of said program, said first version having first content information;  
associating an advertisement with said first characteristic; and  
broadcasting said advertisement with said first content information.

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12. The method of claim 11 wherein said first content information comprises a rating of the version of the program.

13. The method of claim 11 further comprising:

determining a second characteristic of a second version of said plurality of versions of said program, said second version having second content information;  
associating an advertisement with said second characteristic; and  
broadcasting said advertisement with said second content information.

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14. The method of claim 13 wherein said second content information comprises a rating of the version of the program.

15. A method of presenting advertising in conjunction with the broadcast of a first program comprising a plurality of versions and a second program comprising a plurality of versions, the method comprising:

selecting a time interval to broadcast an advertisement associated with said first program;

determining the number of channels utilized by said plurality of versions of said second program during said time interval;

broadcasting a first advertisement during said time interval; and

broadcasting a second advertisement during said time interval if said number of channels utilized is at least two less than the number of channels available.

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16. The method of claim 15 wherein said first advertisement is associated with a first version of said plurality of versions of said first program.

17. The method of claim 15 wherein said second advertisement is associated with a second version of said plurality of versions of said first program.

18. A method of transferring information in conjunction with the broadcast of a first program comprising a plurality of versions and a second program comprising a plurality of versions, the method comprising:

5 defining a time interval;

determining a first number of channels utilized by said plurality of versions of said first program during said time interval;

determining a second number of channels utilized by said plurality of versions of said second program during said time interval;

10 comparing the sum of said first number and said second number to a predefined value; and

transferring data during said time interval if said sum is less than the number of channels available.

19. A method of selecting a displayed version of a program containing a plurality of versions comprising:

5 transferring viewer preference information from a receiving unit to a broadcaster of said program;

storing said viewer preference information in said receiving unit;

receiving a broadcast signal comprising at least two versions of said plurality of versions of said program;

accessing said viewer preference information;

obtaining content information from said program; and

10 selecting one version of said at least two versions employing said viewer preference information.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein said step of obtaining content information further comprises:

obtaining content information from packet headers contained in a digital broadcast signal.

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21. The method of claim 19 further comprising:

transferring updated viewer preference information to said broadcaster;  
storing said updated viewer preference information in said receiving unit;  
and

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selecting a new one version of said at least two versions employing said updated viewer preference information.

22. A system for selecting a version of a program from a broadcast comprising a plurality of versions of said program, said system comprising:

a receiving unit that displays a list of said plurality of versions of said program;

5 a communications unit contained in said receiving unit that transmits a viewer preference indicating one version of said plurality of versions to a broadcaster of said program;

a memory that stores said viewer preference in said receiving unit;

10 a receiver in said receiving unit that receives a broadcast program comprising at least two versions of said plurality of versions of said program; and

a selection unit in said receiving unit that selects one version from said at least two versions of said program employing said viewer preference and displays said one version.

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